

The Ship

Written by

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INT. SPACESHIP - DAY

SUPERIMPOSE: 2058

We OPEN on a desolate spaceship. A panel and monitors surround us as light emits from the large screens. Through the screens, we see what resides outside: deep space.

The camera pans and we find TRAE WILLIAMS, 30s, Afro-Latino, laying down on the floor of the ship. His eyes are melancholic, yet peaceful, as he replays a memory in his head...

TRAES POV:

We hear what sounds like a courtroom and trial concluding...

JUDGE (O.S.)

Mr Williams, you have been found guilty of DUI manslaughter, which is a second degree felony under Unified Districts of the World, statute 316-193. You are hereby sentenced to a 15 day hyperspeed logistics mission to space sector delta 117B7. This will be equivalent to 15 years on earth. You are tasked with the delivery of vital materials. I wish you the best of luck with your sentence.

SOUND: A gavel.

The sound of the gavel, jolts Trae up from the floor. We see him eye the calendar on the wall. Then crossing out "Wednesday, August 15th". We notice ONE OTHER DAY is crossed out on this calendar. Fourteen days are left of this mission.

TRAE

Computer, what time is it on earth?

MILOS

Mr. Williams, my name is actually MILOS. Also, in what time zone are you referring to Mr. Williams?

TRAE

And I'll call you Milos when you call me by my name, Trae.

MILOS

Sorry, Mr. Williams.

Trae gets more annoyed.

TRAЕ
Eastern Standard Time Zone. Now.

A beat.

MILOS
3pm.

TRAЕ
3pm.

Traе sits in the chair in front of the panel and monitor and we hear what could have been, if only he wasn't on this ship...

TRAЕ POV:

We hear the sound of a bus stopping in the street. A YOUNG BOY, T.J., 5-years-old, is heard as he hops of the bus.

TJ (O.S.)
Dad!

TRAЕ (O.S.)
Hey son. How was your first day?

TJ (O.S.)
You were right. It wasn't as bad as I thought it was.

TRAЕ (O.S.)
Did you make any friends?

TJ (O.S.)
I think so. I talked to this boy named Blake and this girl named Bia.

TRAЕ (O.S.)
Good. Tell me all about your first day.

TJ (O.S.)
Ummmm... first we started with our names and then they showed us all around the school. And then the teacher showed us a book all about her and the kinds of things she likes to do. She's really cool. She goes rock climbing. Why can't we go rock climbing?

TRAE (O.S.)
We can. But for that, we'll have to
wait till you're older.

TJ (O.S.)
How much older?

TRAE (O.S.)
Haha. 12. At least.

TJ (O.S.)
You promise?

A beat.

TRAE (O.S.)
Yes. I promise. I love you son.

TJ (O.S.)
I love you too daddy.

The voices end. Trae takes in the fact that he isn't sure if he'll get to act on that promise at all.

He sits back in his seat.

TRAE
Milos. Why is your name Milos?

MILOS
MILOS stands for Mapping,
Intelligence, Learning Operating
System, Mr. -- I mean, Trae.

TRAE
Got it. And thanks.

A beat. His stomach growls. Trae gets up and goes to open what appears to be a mini-fridge in the center of the ship.

Upon opening the fridge door, Trae's eyes widen. WTF?

The refrigerator is filled with small pills. No food is in sight.

TRAE (CONT'D)
So Milos... where is the food in
this place?

MILOS
The food that you will intake for
your mission Trae, is inside of the
fridge. There you will find a 15
day supply of Nutripills.

(MORE)

MILOS (CONT'D)

They are carefully rationed and contain all of the nutrients and hydration for your journey.

TRAЕ

This is hell.

MILOS

No, Trae. Hell, as described by Christianity, is actually a dimension full of fire and brimstone--

Trae rolls his eyes and covers his face with his hand.

TRAЕ

Milos!

INT. SPACESHIP - FIVE DAYS LATER

Trae is shirtless and sweaty as he does a set of abs among other exercises in a calisthenics workout. On the calendar that rests on the wall, we see it is now DAY 7.

VARIOUS SHOTS:

- Trae knocks out a set of push-ups.
- Trae hits the bicycle with his legs.
- Trae begins leg lifts.
- Trae does a plank, tightening his core as he holds form.

Trae has finished his workout, he is breathing hard.

TRAЕ

Milos, turn on the air conditioning.

MILOS

Sorry, Trae. There is no air conditioning allowed in this ship due to your sentencing.

TRAЕ

So I can't have any fucking AC at all? That's inhumane. Why are they so petty?

MILOS

I am sorry, Trae. That is the programming I was given.

TRAE

Yea, yea. Is there at least TV in
this thing? Netflix or something?

MILOS

I am sorry-

TRAE

Fuck it.

Trae uses a towel to wipe off the sweat on his body, as he sits there another memory takes him...

TRAE POV:

We hear a door creak open. Footsteps. Then a WOMAN's voice startles us, and apparently the person who was walking -- Trae.

WOMAN (O.S.)

What are you doing here?!

TRAE (O.S.)

I came here to see him.

WOMAN (O.S.)

No! The judge already told you, you can't be within 100 feet of me.

TRAE (O.S.)

Yes, because you lied and said I endangered our son. You know what happened that day, Tiffany. You know I'd never put TJ in any danger. Ever.

TIFFANY (O.S.)

Yes. But it doesn't matter. I don't want you in his life. I don't want our son to end up like you.

TRAE (O.S.)

What? A drunk? I've been sober for seven years! I am not the man I used to be and you know that. But you want to punish me for leaving you.

TIFFANY (O.S.)

You chose that dirty, rotten bitch that you barely even knew over the woman who had your first child.

(MORE)

TIFFANY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You slept with her behind my back
and think I was supposed to be okay
with you just up and leaving me
with our son?

TRAE (O.S.)

I wasn't leaving him. I was leaving
you. You were why I drank so much.
You belittled me, your father
fucking hates me, and you were
always jealous of all of my
success. Most wives would
congratulate their husband for
getting promoted as fast as I did.
But not you. Its like you were
competing with me. Nothing I could
do was ever good enough for you.
Marriage isn't some fucking
competition.

TIFFANY (O.S.)

My dad didn't raise me to let some
man take care of me. I wasn't
competing with you. I wanted to do
for myself and for this family. I
was trying to find a job after
getting my degree, but nobody would
hire me.

TRAE (O.S.)

So that's why you said they should
have given my promotion to Dustin?
Not that I was a useless, piece of
shit that you were fucked with?

TIFFANY (O.S.)

When you got the promotion I had
just gotten another rejection phone
call from the hiring manager at the
firm. I was pissed.

TRAE (O.S.)

So you couldn't be happy for me
because it wasn't about you?

Silence.

TRAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

I want to see our son. You lied to
the court about me drinking again.
I deserve to see my boy.

TIFFANY (O.S.)
Probably. But I don't care. Get out.

Silence again. Trae exhales.

TRAЕ (O.S.)
This isn't over, Tiffany. I'm going to see our son whether you like it or not.

TIFFANY (O.S.)
Good luck convincing the judge.

We hear a door SLAM shut.

The memory ends. Trae sits on the floor, melancholic. Then searches for something to cheer him up.

Trae smirks, then lays back down on the floor. He slips his hands down to slip his pants down his hips.

He closes his eyes and begins imagining something... cheerful. He starts to get into it.

TRAЕ
Fuck...

MILOS
Yes, Trae?

Trae gets instantly irritated.

TRAЕ
Ugh! Not now Milos!

INT. SPACESHIP - FOUR DAYS LATER

Trae sits in the cabin of the ship, playing X's and O's with himself on a notepad. We see several sheets of paper in the notebook have been used as he's clearly been playing this game for hours, if not days.

The calendar on the wall now shows that it is DAY 11.

TRAЕ
Milos?

MILOS
Yes, Trae. How can I be of assistance?

TRAE

How long do children typically remember their parents?

MILOS

I am unsure of the nature of your question, Trae.

Trae gets frustrated.

TRAE

Let's say a parent left their kids life. What age would the kid be to completely forget about the parent? 5? 6?

MILOS

You're asking about the memory capacity of children and want to know what age a child must be in order to remember more of what occurred in their life. Is that correct, Trae?

TRAE

Yes. That's it. So if a kid's 5... how long until they forget their parent if they're no longer there?

MILOS

Typically a child can remember people and events for most of their life - especially if they are adolescent. But as they reach adulthood, those memories do fade.

TRAE

Got it... So he still remembers me.

MILOS

Trae, are you referring to your own child?

TRAE

That's none of your business.

MILOS

According to public records, you are the father of a son named TJ, short for Trae Junior.

TRAE

Yes and that's none of your business.

MILOS

I do not mean to intrude, Trae.

TRAЕ

Got it. Its quiet time now.

MILOS

Alright, Trae.

Trae rolls his eyes. He gets up and walks over to the portfolio that has his name on it, "TRAЕ WILLIAMS". He opens it and sees "MISSION OBJECTIVE" on the first page. Its a long document.

He looks up and then exhales loudly.

TRAЕ

Milos.

MILOS

I thought it was quiet time, Trae?

TRAЕ

Now it's question time. What is my mission again?

MILOS

Have you forgotten it, Trae?

TRAЕ

It's just... with every day, I feel like I am forgetting more and more.

MILOS

That is because each day here is a year in earth time. We are eleven days into this space voyage, therefore, we are eleven years into it for you. It is normal for this to feel like short-term memory loss, Trae.

TRAЕ

Okay, so what is my mission? Remind me.

MILOS

Your mission is to the deliver vital materials to an interstellar community on Planet 2386.

TRAЕ

Okay. Where are the vital materials located at on the ship?

Milos is silent. Trae is confused.

TRAE (CONT'D)
Milos?

MILOS
Yes, Trae?

TRAE
Where on the ship are these vital materials that I am supposed to deliver on the planet?

Milos is silent once again. WTF?

TRAE (CONT'D)
Why are you ignoring me when I ask that question?

MILOS
I am not ignoring you, Trae. I am simply not allowed to answer that question. It goes against my programming.

TRAE
And why is that...? It's my mission. Why can't you assist me in locating the materials that I am supposed to deliver? That doesn't make any sense.

MILOS
Unfortunately, not all things make sense to humans, Trae. It is your fatal flaw.

TRAE
Whatever.

Trae begins to search the ship for the vital materials. He looks in every nook and cranny. But finds nothing. He gives up.

TRAE (CONT'D)
Four days left...

INT. SPACESHIP - THREE DAYS LATER

Trae is sleeping in his pod as a dream stirs him in his sleep. We hear what he is experiencing in his dream...

TRAE'S POV:

We hear a car driving with Trae speaking on speaker with another person.

TRAE (O.S.)

No mom! No! The judge won't reverse the restraining order!

TRAE'S MOM (O.S.)

There must be something we can do!

TRAE (O.S.)

There isn't! I already tried.

TRAE'S MOM (O.S.)

Well, can we try to find another lawyer that can help? There has to be a way!

TRAE (O.S.)

(slurring words)

No! There isn't. Mom, look. I don't want to talk right now. I'm headed to the beach. I just need to get this shit off my head.

TRAE'S MOM (O.S.)

Trae... have you been drinking?

TRAE (O.S.)

What?! No!

A beat.

TRAE'S MOM (O.S.)

(softly)

...Trae. If you have been drinking again, this is going to hurt any chances--

TRAE (O.S.)

I HAVEN'T BEEN DRINKING!

TRAE'S MOM (O.S.)

Honey, you're slurring your words.
Please pull ove-

TRAE (O.S.)

Goodbye mom!

We hear that Trae has ended the call.

TRAE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(sotto)

Everyone thinks they know what's best for me. Mom. Tiffany. That fucking lawyer. I know what's best for me. I'll get my son back on my own. I'll drink if I want to. I didn't do anything wrong. Fuck Tiffany.

(beat)

Oh shit!!

We hear a car skid as it hits the breaks and then a loud car crash. Screams erupt from the surrounding area.

WOMAN #1 (O.S.)

Oh my God!!! Someone help!

We hear running coming closer...

MAN #1 (O.S.)

Hey!! Oh shit. I'll try to get the door open!

WOMAN #1 (O.S.)

I'll check on the other driver!

A few beats pass.

MAN #1 (O.S.)

This guys alive! Help me get the door open.

We hear struggling and then exhaling from both Man #1 and Woman #1.

MAN #1 (O.S.) (CONT'D)

What about the other driver?

A beat.

WOMAN #1 (O.S.)

It was an older man... He's dead.

Trae jolts awake in a panic with sweat all over his face. He looks like he just got out of the car accident that we just heard.

MILOS

Trae, are you alright sir?

TRAE

What?! Yes! I'm fucking fine.

MILOS

I recommend taking a Nutripill for any dehydration, Trae.

TRAЕ

Shut up.

Trae tries to calm down as he sits in his pod. Then he gets up and goes to the mini fridge, he opens it. He grabs a Nutripill for hydration and slips it in his mouth as it dissolves under his tongue.

INT. SPACESHIP - THE NEXT DAY

Trae is sitting in the chair in front of the panels and monitor, he looks into space and tries to find the planet that they will soon land on.

TRAЕ

Milos?

MILOS

Yes, Trae.

TRAЕ

How long until we see the planet? I don't see shit out there.

MILOS

We just entered space sector delta 117B7. You will soon see the destination in T-minus 2 hours.

Trae nods his head and sits back in the chair. Then he looks pensive. He rises up from the chair and once again eyes the storage doors on the ship.

TRAЕ

Milos?

MILOS

Yes, Trae.

TRAЕ

Where are the vital materials that I am supposed to deliver to this planet? It's the day of our land and they're nowhere to be found. How am I supposed to complete this mission and my sentence if I can't find them?

MILOS

The vital materials that you are
delivering to the planet are
already found.

TRAЕ

No. No they are not.

MILOS

Yes they are Trae.

TRAЕ

Really? So where are they then?
What do they look like?

MILOS

You.

Trae is taken aback. His face is full of confusion.

TRAЕ

Come again? Me?

MILOS

Yes, Trae. That is correct.

TRAЕ

And you're suddenly allowed to tell
me that now?

MILOS

According to my programming, we are
in space sector delta 117B7. I can
now disclose the location of your
mission's vital materials.

TRAЕ

Which... are me? So I am delivering
myself to this planet? What kind of
mission is this, Milos?

MILOS

You are not delivering yourself to
a planet, Trae.

TRAЕ

So what am I doing then?

Milos is silent. Trae grows angry.

TRAЕ (CONT'D)

Tell me! Now!

Milos continues to be silent. Trae walks over to the front of the monitor and panels, slamming his fists on the panels.

TRAE (CONT'D)
Milos!! Tell me right the fuck now
what is going on!

MILOS
Trae. Your mission is to delivery
vital materials to space sector
delta 117B7.

TRAE
Answer my fucking question!! Why am
I delivering myself to some fucking
planet?!

MILOS
There is no planet.

TRAE
What?!! Then what am I delivering
myself to you stupid bitch?!

MILOS
Trae, you are delivering yourself
to star, NML Seguele.

TRAE
What is that?!!

MILOS
A star in this sector, Trae.

TRAE
A star? What kind of star?

MILOS
A sun.

Trae freezes. It's as if the air has been sucked out of the room. Several beats pass as Trae assess what this means. He is delivering himself... to a sun.

Everything suddenly makes sense.

He's never going back to earth.

TRAE
...My sentence. My mission... is
death.

MILOS
Yes, Trae. It is.

Trae's entire world fall's apart.

TRAE'S POV:

Suddenly and all at once, he hears the voices that we have heard over the course of the movie -- TJ's, Tiffany's, his mothers, Woman #1, and Man #1. They layer over each other and echo through his head.

Trae looks up and now can see the SUN, NML SEGUELE. The ship is approaching it at rapid speed.

Tears form in Trae's eyes as he takes in the bright, orange and yellow light that emits from the sight and fills up the room.

Trae stares into the light as the ship gets even closer to the sun.

Beats pass, silence. Until--

TRAE
Milos...

MILOS
Yes, Trae?

TRAE
Can you send a message back to earth? When you're on death row, you're allowed final words. Can you record mine and send them to someone?

Silence. Trae waits eagerly for a response. Hope fills his face.

MILOS
According to my programming... yes.

Trae silently rejoices. Then thinks of what to say...

TRAE
This will be to my... son. TJ.
Okay?

MILOS
Okay, Trae. I'll start recording now.

Trae nods, tears rolling down his cheeks. As Trae records this message, the ship slowly approaches the sun. The light will get brighter and brighter as he speaks. The ship will begin rattling more and more as well...

TRAE

...Hey TJ. I'm sure you've wondered where I have been all of this time. I was uh-- sent on a mission. A mission across space for... for what I did when I was there. I never wanted any of this to happen. I never wanted you to feel abandoned, which -- you probably do. I wanted to be a good father. I wanted to show you how to be a man. Like my father taught me. I am so sorry for any part of this that hurt you.

(a beat)

You've... just reached your twenties so... I am sure you don't remember much of me. But for what you do, I hope it's all of the good moments we shared together. I loved being your dad. I only wish I could have completed our journey together as father and son. I'm sorry I couldn't fulfill that promise of us going rock climbing. But there is one that I will never break. I'll always be with you. Always.

The ship has now reached the embers of the sun, it begins to rattle the ship even more as it takes it into it.

TRAE (CONT'D)

...I love you son...

The sun enraptures the ship, burning it and setting it ablaze. Trae's eyes close as he takes in the inevitable...

TRAE'S POV:

TJ (O.S.)
I love you, too daddy.

END OF MOVIE.